16.

A

SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO

GODFATHERS

AND

GODMOTHERS.

SHEWING

THE NATURE OF THEIR UNDERTAKING,
THE REASON AND EXCELLENCY OF
THE INSTITUTION,
AND THE HAPPY ADVANTAGES IT GIVES

SUCH SURETIES,

TO PROMOTE THE GLORY OF GOD, AND THE
SALVATION OF SOULS.

A NEW EDITION.

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THE

OFFICE AND DUTY

OF

GODFATHERS and *GODMOTHERS.*

SO precious is the Soul of Man, and ſo great the Care which lies upon us, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, to promote its Salvation, that you are not to wonder if we call in all the Aſſiſtance we can from other Perſons: And that in Diſcharge of our great Truſt we not nly declare what is the Covenant which God hath vouchſafed to make with every Member of his Church; but alſo

apply ourſelves earneſtly to all thoſe, who, either by Nature, or other Obligations, are concerned in promoting the Salvation of others; that they alſo would compaſſionately afford us their helping Hand.

And ſince the wiſe Conſtitutions of our Church have appointed Godfathers and Godmothers, as Joint-Securities with the Parents, in Behalf of thoſe Perſons who are entered into Covenant with God by Baptiſm, (which Office you have now taken upon you) I thought it requiſite for your, as well as my Sake, and the Sake of the Infant for whom you have engaged, that you ſhould have always by you an Admonition exciting you to your Duty, and directing you faithfully to perform the ſame. For the better Performance whereof, I ſhall obſerve the following Method.

I. I ſhall give you a brief Account of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Baptiſmal Covenant; of that Covenant which you yourſelves have formerly, and this Child, by your Means, hath now entered into by Baptiſm.

II. I ſhall

II. I ſhall ſhew the Meaning and Import of theſe Words, *Godfathers* and *Godmothers:* the Term by which you are called, upon the Account of having preſented this Child to Baptiſm.

III. I will ſhew the Nature of your Engagements, as *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, and the Duties on your Parts to be performed.

IV. I will ſhew what Reaſon the Church had to appoint *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, not only to repreſent, but to engage for the Infant in Baptiſm.

V. I ſhall offer ſome Directions, how the Whole that you have undertaken may be faithfully diſcharged by you.

VI. And laſtly, I ſhall endeavour to encourage and exhort you, (upon all like Occaſions) both cheerfully to undertake, and faithfully to execute this Spiritual Charge.

I. I am to give a brief and ſummary Account of the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Baptiſmal Covenant, which is alſo called the *Second* Covenant, or the *Covenant of Grace*, and was obtained for us by the Mediation of JESUS CHRIST. For when our firſt Parents had

tranſgreſſed the Covenant which God made with them, and by ſuch their Diſobedience had (both as to themſelves and all their Poſterity) forfeited the Favour of God, "with all Hopes of everlaſting "Life;" foraſmuch as the "Sentence of "Death was then paſſed upon all Men "to their Condemnation;" his own eternal Son was graciouſly pleaſed to intercede for miſerable loſt Mankind, and offer Himſelf to die in their Stead, as a Ranſom and Propitiation for them. And accordingly, in the Fulneſs of Time, our compaſſionate Saviour, the ever-bleſſed JESUS, came down from Heaven, took our Nature upon Him, and was made like unto us, Sin only excepted: And when, by an holy and unblameable Life, He had ſet us an Example that we might follow his Steps; and by his Doctrine had fully revealed the Will of GOD, and what was expected from Mankind under the Diſpenſation of the ſecond Covenant; He completed the Work of our Redemption, by laying down his Life for us, and ſubmitted to the moſt painful and ſhameful Death, even the Death of the Croſs; in order to make a full, perfect, and ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation,

Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World; and alſo to obtain from God the Father, that Mankind ſhould be put into a new State of Trial, and received into a new Covenant of Grace and Mercy. And that theſe glad Tidings might be known unto the World, our bleſſed Saviour ſent his Apoſtles, giving Commiſſion to them, and alſo to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who ſucceed them to the End of the World, to enter all Nations into this Covenant, by Baptizing them "In the "Name of the Father, of the Son, and "of the Holy Ghoſt: teaching them to "obſerve all Things whatſoever he had "commanded," *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.

The Graces and Benefits which GOD hath been pleaſed to promiſe and beſtow on his Part in this Covenant, which you yourſelves formerly, and this Child by your Means hath now entered into, are briefly theſe: Both you and this Child were by Baptiſm "made Members of "CHRIST, the Children of GOD, and In-"heritors of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Iſt, You were made Members of CHRIST, by being incorporated into that holy Society of Men which are called *the*

Church, of which CHRIST JESUS is the Spiritual Head, by which Privilege you have the Aſſiſtance of his Grace and Holy Spirit, enabling you to conform to his Religion, and to obey his Laws. *2dly*, You were in an eſpecial Manner, adopted to be the Children of GOD, ſuch as He would have a particular Care of, and Regard to, and whom he would indulge with ſingular Favours; as the Pardon of Sins upon hearty Repentance, and Acceſs by Prayer to the Throne of Grace, with a Promiſe of granting what is needful for our Souls and Bodies. And, *3dly*, As the Perfection of all, you were then made Heirs and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, ſo as to have a Right conferred upon you to all thoſe unſpeakable Joys contained in that happy State. All theſe peculiar Favours were beſtowed upon you by GOD in Baptiſm, upon certain Terms and Conditions to be made good on your Parts; which are briefly ſummed up in our *Church Catechiſm*; namely,

1ſt, "That you ſhould renounce the "Devil and all his Works; the Pomps "and Vanities of this wicked World; "and all the ſinful Luſts of the Fleſh."

By the Word Devil, we underſtand all the fallen Angels, who, though they be very many, are frequently in Scripture expreſſed by this Word, as if they were but one: Either as being ſubject to one, as Chief or Prince of the reſt, who is called *Satan* or *Beelzebub*; or becauſe they are all concerned in one deviliſh Deſign for promoting Sin and Wickedneſs. And by *Renouncing* the Devil is meant, the Renouncing the Worſhip of falſe Gods, and all Idolatry, being at firſt introduced by him: The Renouncing all Dealings with the Devil, whether by practiſing Witchcraft ourſelves, or by going to Witches and Conjurors for Aſſiſtance, or conſulting them upon any Occaſion whatſoever. By the *Works of the Devil*, we underſtand all Manner of Sin; chiefly thoſe Sins which the Devil himſelf is particularly charged with; ſuch as Murder, Cruelty, Malice, Pride, Envy, Lying; and eſpecially the Tempting others to Sin. *As to the World*, becauſe the greateſt Part of Mankind have been prevailed upon by the Devil "that wicked Spirit, which worketh in the Children "of Diſobedience," to withdraw their Love and Duty from their Creator: You

have covenanted to renounce their Ways, ſo as not to be tempted either by their Examples, their Company, their Perſuaſions, their Threats, or their Promiſes, to deſert the great Captain of your Salvation, JESUS CHRIST; and that neither the Honours, the Riches, nor the Pleaſures of the World ſhould allure you, nor the evil and vexatious Things of it, ſhould fright you into any Sin. And *as to the Luſt of the Fleſh*, you did ſolemnly engage yourſelves to exerciſe a continual Warfare againſt the corrupt Luſts of your own ſinful Nature, which are too frequently rebelling againſt the Dictates of your own Reaſon, and of the Holy Spirit of God. Thus in your Baptiſm you did covenant " to renounce the *Devil*, the " *World*, and the *Fleſh*."

2*dly*, " That you ſhould believe all the " Articles of the Chriſtian Faith:" That you ſhould give a hearty and ready Aſſent to all thoſe divine Truths revealed by GOD in Scripture, and given to conduct you to Heaven; particularly that you ſhould " believe in GOD the Father, who " *Made* you and all the World; that " you ſhould believe in GOD the Son, " who *Redeemed* you and all Mankind:

" That

"That you ſhould believe in GOD the "Holy Ghoſt, who *Sanctifieth* you and "all the Elect People of God." All which Articles of the Chriſtian Faith are briefly contained in your Creed.

3dly, That you ſhould ſincerely "obey "and keep GOD's holy Will and Com-"mandments, and walk in the ſame all the "Days of your Life." Remember therefore, that it is GOD's Will and Commandment, that you ſhould be ſober, temperate, chaſte and pure, ſelf-denying, and mortified; that you ſhould be meek, humble, peaceable, and charitable, true and juſt in all your Dealings, dutiful and obedient to your Superiors; that you ſhould repent of your Sins, and forſake them; that you ſhould believe in GOD, fear Him, truſt in Him, and love Him above all Things; that you ſhould be patient in Afflictions, ſubmitting to his Will and Wiſdom; that you ſhould attend upon his Ordinances, upon his Word, and upon his Sacraments; that you ſhould be devout and conſtant in Prayer; and that you ſhould ſincerely endeavour to perform all the Parts of your Duty towards GOD, your Neighbour, and yourſelf, as it is

laid down in Scripture, and briefly contained in the *Ten Commandments*.

Thus I have ſhewed you the Sum of the Baptiſmal Covenant, and of the Graces and Benefits beſtowed on GOD's Part, as alſo the Duty to be performed on the Part of every Perſon that is baptized. By which ſhort Account you may perceive, that there is not any Doctrine of the Chriſtian Religion more neceſſary for you thoroughly to underſtand and rightly to apprehend, than this Doctrine of the *Covenant of Grace*, both upon your own, as well as the Child's Account, whom ye have brought to, and engaged for, in Baptiſm.

II. In the *Second* Place I am to ſhew you the Meaning and Import of the Words, *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*.

It may be ſufficient at this Time briefly to acquaint you, that thereby is meant a Sort of *Spiritual Parents*, who are alſo called *Sureties*, by Reaſon that *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* are a Security, joined together with the natural Parents, in Behalf of the Infant, which by Baptiſm is entered into Covenant with GOD; and that theſe *Spiritual Parents* are to promote the Spiritual Welfare of the Infant, by joining

joining with the Natural Parents in ſuch good Inſtructions, Admonitions, and Endeavours, as are neceſſary to further its eternal Intereſt.

III. *Thirdly*, I will ſhew the Nature of your Engagements, as *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, and the Duty on your Parts to be performed.

You have been already told what are the Duties to be performed by every Perſon that enters into Covenant with GOD in Baptiſm, namely, "To renounce the "Devil, the World, and the Fleſh; to "believe all the Articles of the Chriſtian "Faith; and ſincerely to obey GOD's "holy Will and Commandments." Now ſince you have promiſed theſe Things in Behalf of an Infant, who is not capable of knowing the Conditions of the Baptiſmal Covenant, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that ſomething is to be done by you, who are the SURETIES, in order to enable this Infant to perform what hath been thus promiſed.

Before I lay down the Duties of *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, I will ſhew the Nature of your Engagements, and in order thereto, will endeavour to clear up the Senſe of theſe Words in our Church-Catechiſm;

Catechiſm; "THEY did promiſe and "vow Three Things in my Name," &c. There are ſome Perſons, who from theſe Words do conclude, That the *Sureties* in Baptiſm do not only engage to inſtruct the Party baptized in the Nature of this Covenant, but alſo that he ſhall actually perform the ſame. This ſurely cannot be the Meaning deſigned by our Church in thoſe Words; becauſe that would be in a Manner impoſſible, and what no Perſon can be certain another will perform, (though he be ſufficiently inſtructed in his Duty, and told the Danger of neglecting it;) and would be apt to deter conſcientious Perſons from doing ſo charitable an Office, and would make others to have no Care about it, as being an obligation they deſpair of ever diſcharging. On the other hand, there are ſome who lay very little or no Streſs upon theſe Words; concluding, That to do a Thing in any one's Name, (eſpecially in the Tranſacting of Covenants, where Privileges and Advantages accrue thereby) is no more than to act as an Attorney or Proxy in the other's Stead; that at the acting as ſuch in any Covenant, by Reaſon of the Abſence, Minority, or other Incapacity of the

the Perſon chiefly concerned, it is very uſual for the Proxy ſo to perſonate or repreſent the covenanting Perſon, as if the Proxy himſelf were the Perſon whom he repreſents; and that theſe Words, "They "did promiſe and vow Three Things in "my Name," do amount to no more than this: That I being incapable myſelf, by Reaſon of my Infancy, to expreſs a Conſent to my Part of the Covenant, my Godfathers and Godmothers were my Mouth, and did it for me: This I do indeed take to be Part of the Senſe, but not the whole Importance of thoſe Words; for then, there would be nothing to be done on the Godfathers and Godmothers Part; whereas they are ſomething more than mere Proxies, and are really and truly *Sureties* for ſomething to be performed. Now, I conceive, the beſt Way to underſtand the Meaning of any Author in Words more generally expreſſed, is to conſult the Expoſitions and Explications which he makes of his own Senſe elſewhere, if any ſuch can be found. That therefore we may have no Doubt about the Senſe of theſe Words, our Church hath explained the Engagements of Godfathers and Godmothers in the Exhortation given to them after

after Baptiſm, the Words of which run thus:

" Foraſmuch as this Child hath pro-
" miſed by you, who are its *Sureties*, to
" renounce the Devil and all his Works,
" to believe in GOD and to ſerve Him;
" ye muſt remember, that it is your Part
" and Duty, to ſee that this Infant be
" taught (ſo ſoon as he ſhall be able to
" learn) what a ſolemn Vow, Promiſe,
" and Profeſſion he hath here made by
" you. And that he may know theſe
" Things the better, ye ſhall call upon
" him to hear Sermons; and chiefly ye
" ſhall provide, that he may learn the
" *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten*
" *Commandments* in the vulgar Tongue;
" and all other Things which a Chriſtian
" ought to know and believe to his
" Soul's Health: And that this Child
" may be virtuouſly brought up to lead
" a Godly and a Chriſtian Life. And
" ye are alſo to take Care that this Child
" be brought to the Biſhop to be Con-
" firmed by him," *&c.*

From theſe Words of our Church, it ſeems very plain, what are the *Engagements* of Godfathers and Godmothers; and that their Duty conſiſts in theſe three Points;

Points; *1ſt*, That ſo ſoon as the Child becomes capable to be taught, they take Care that he be *Inſtructed* in the Nature of that Covenant which, as *Sureties*, they undertook for him. *2dly*, That he be *Admoniſhed* and *Adviſed* to lead his Life according to the Obligations thereby laid upon him. *3dly*, That he be brought to the Biſhop to be *Confirmed*, and take upon himſelf the Profeſſion of his Covenant.

Firſt, You that are Godfathers and Godmothers muſt take Care that the Perſon by you preſented to Baptiſm, be *Inſtructed* in the Nature of the Covenant, which you, as his *Sureties*, did enter into; which is the Import of theſe Words in the Exhortation after Baptiſm; "Remember that it is your Parts and Duties, to ſee that this *Infant* be taught "what a ſolemn Vow, Promiſe, and "Profeſſion he hath here made by you." This Inſtruction is properly to be begun by *Catechiſing*. "Chiefly (ſays the Exhortation) ye ſhall provide that he may "learn the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, "and the *Ten Commandments* in the vulgar "Tongue; and all other Things which "a Chriſtian ought to know and believe

"to

" to his Soul's Health;" which is the proper Work of Catechizing.

For their further Inſtruction in this grand Matter of their Covenant "Ye ſhall " call upon them to hear Sermons," and admoniſh them frequently and diligently to attend unto GOD's Word taught and expounded in the Church by Preaching; which is a Method deſigned to improve them in all neceſſary and ſaving Knowledge; the Beginning of which Knowledge is firſt laid by Catechiſing.

Secondly, Having thus taken Care that the baptized Perſon be well inſtructed in the Conditions of his Covenant, your next Care muſt be to admoniſh and adviſe him ſeriouſly to apply himſelf to live according to the Obligations laid on him in Baptiſm. For the leaſt that a Bondſman can do, is to call upon the Debtor to diſcharge what he owes. Youth, of all Perſons, want good Monitors, as being of themſelves giddy and inconſiderate, and too regardleſs of what moſt nearly concerns them: And therefore *Sureties* ought to make it a Part of their Care, peculiarly to admoniſh ſuch as they have brought into Covenant, that they live according to it: So it follows in the Exhortation

hortation: "Ye ſhall take Care that this "Child be virtuouſly brought up, to lead "a Godly and a Chriſtian Life," *&c.*

Thirdly, You are to take Care that the baptized Perſon ſhall perſonally come before the Biſhop, and take upon himſelf his Baptiſmal Covenant, ſo ſoon as he hath been ſufficiently inſtructed therein. So it follows in the Exhortation; "Ye "are to take Care that this Child be "brought to the Biſhop to be Confirmed "by him, ſo ſoon as he can ſay the *Creed*, "the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Com-* "*mandments* in the vulgar Tongue."

Thus have I endeavoured briefly to ſhew the Duty and Engagements of Godfathers and Godmothers. I proceed in the next Place,

IV. To ſhew what Reaſons the Church had to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, not only to repreſent, but to engage for the Infant in Baptiſm.

You have been told, "That the whole Solemnity of Baptiſm is a Covenant between GOD and the baptized Perſon; That in the Tranſacting of Covenants, the Perſons concerned muſt be preſent; either in their own Perſons or by their Proxies, to make mutual Engagements to each other.

other. Now ſince in our mortal State we are not able to bear the Majeſty of GOD's Preſence, in Condeſcenſion to our Weakneſs, GOD hath appointed the Miniſters of the Goſpel in his Stead, to aſſure us of the Graces and Benefits promiſed us on GOD's Part of the Covenant: The Child who is brought to be baptized, being ſo far incapable of tranſacting the Covenant, and engaging by himſelf to perform its Conditions, that he cannot underſtand the Nature thereof; the Church hath wiſely appointed certain Perſons to repreſent the Infant, who are to appear as Proxies, and tranſact the Covenant on the Child's Behalf, and to engage for him, as far as they can, that he will perform his Part of the Covenant, that ſo the Sacrament of *Baptiſm* may be completely adminiſtered.

Nor hath it been thought ſufficient that theſe Perſons ſhould ſtand only as bare Repreſentatives of the Child; but it was alſo thought fit that they ſhould be as a Security to the Church, that the Perſon admitted into the Society of Chriſtians ſhould be inſtructed and admoniſhed, and alſo engaged ſolemnly to profeſs what belongs to him to perform, as a Member of that Body.

Nor

Nor is it a ſufficient Security to the Church, that the Parents are bound to take this Care. It is confeſſed, that the inſtructing and breeding up of Children in the Principles of Religion, is chiefly and principally the Work of the Parents, who are obliged, both by the Light of Nature, as alſo by the expreſs Laws of God, "to bring up their Children in the "Nurture and Admonition of the Lord." But this is not ſufficient in ſo grand a Concern; for Parents may not live to inſtruct their Children, or they may be careleſs or negligent of their Duty, as too many of them are: It is therefore highly requiſite that beſides the Obligations which lie on the Parents, there ſhould be alſo ſome other Security given by ſuch Perſons as are likely to uſe all their honeſt and beſt Endeavours herein, upon the Death or Neglect of the Natural Parents.

Nor is the given Security for their Religious Education leſs neceſſary now, than it was in the Primitive Times. It is well known, that then, all Children had their *Sureties*, who engaged at the Font for their Chriſtian Education, and Faithfulneſs in their Covenant; and that for this, as well as other Reaſons, leſt in thoſe perſecuting

cuting Times, the Parents being taken off by Death, their Infants and Children ſhould remain expoſed to the Danger of being trained up in Paganiſh Principles.

God be thanked, the Church in theſe Nations is not expoſed to the Violence of open Perſecutions, as formerly; yet hath ſhe ſtill cruel Enemies, who are very induſtrious and zealous to ſeduce her Members from the primitive Doctrines of Chriſtianity, and to inſtil into their Minds idolatrous, as well as falſe and erroneous Principles; and therefore ſhe hath ſtill Reaſon to take the like Cautions and Securities as were thought neceſſary in the Primitive Church.

We are alſo to conſider; That our Covenant with God, is not only broken by apoſtatizing or falling back from the true God, but alſo by living in Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts: And God is as much diſhonoured, and the Soul as much endangered, by the lewd and vicious Lives of Chriſtians now, as formerly by their Apoſtacy to Paganiſm and Idolatry; and therefore it is both prudent and neceſſary that the Church ſhould ſtill take all poſſible Security in the Covenant of Baptiſm againſt the one, as then it did

againſt the other; eſpecially if it be farther conſidered that in Times of Suffering and Perſecution, the Lives and Manners of Men are not ſo apt to be debauched and corrupted, as in Times of Peace and Proſperity: And that now-a-days, Perſons are much more ſubject to violate the Covenant by ſinful Immoralities, than formerly they were by Paganiſh Apoſtacies. Hence you ſee the Church hath great Reaſon to appoint Godfathers and Godmothers, not only to repreſent the Infant, but alſo to engage for it in Baptiſm, that it ſhall be virtuouſly brought up to lead a Godly and a Chriſtian Life. It being ſure, that if this Inſtitution of Godfathers and Godmothers were prudently undertaken, and conſcientiouſly performed, there could not be a more effectual Means to repair the Decay of Chriſtian Knowledge, Piety and Virtue.

V. I will offer ſome Directions how the Whole, which you have undertaken, may be faithfully diſcharged by you.

1*ſt*, Therefore, let it be your ſpecial Care, to ſee that the Child (ſo ſoon as he is capable) be taught to read. Among the other Helps to ſaving Knowledge, it is highly

highly neceſſary, that Children be enabled to read the Scriptures, and other good Books, which explain and enforce upon us that Doctrine which is contained in the Holy Writings. But becauſe the bare Ability to read is not alone ſufficient to provide for the Spiritual Safety of Youth; make it your Concern, to ſee that the Child be well inſtructed in the Duties of a Chriſtian; and alſo furniſhed with ſome Forms of Devotion, to be uſed conſtantly by him. For the more ready Accompliſhment of theſe Things, let him be put to ſuch a School, where the greateſt Care is taken to ground Children in the Principles of Religion, by making them learn their Catechiſm, and to underſtand the Meaning and Expoſition thereof; where they ſhall be admoniſhed and inſtructed to pray to GOD daily, at leaſt Morning and Evening; and *to ſay Grace* conſtantly before and after their Meals; and where they may be brought up in the habitual Love of GOD and his Laws, and in an Abhorrence and Deteſtation of all Vice and Wickedneſs: I ſay, let ſuch Schools be choſen (before all others) where the Teaching of theſe Things neceſſary, is one main Part of the

Maſter's Care; which, *To the Glory of* God, is the great Care and Buſineſs of *Charity Schools*; And may God put it into the Hearts of thoſe who are able, to increaſe the number of them.

2*dly*, With reference to thoſe Children who muſt live by Labour or Trade; do what you can to have them diſpoſed into ſuch Families, (and ſuch only if poſſible) where a conſtant and daily Courſe of *Family Religion* is ſtrictly obſerved, and Morning and Evening Prayer conſtantly performed. So inconſiderate are Youth, for the moſt Part, that though they have learned to read perfectly well, yet, regardleſs of their own eternal Welfare, they will much neglect it, if wholly left to themſelves, and oftentimes utterly forget it. But if they ſhall be happily placed in godly and religious Families, where they will be frequently called upon to read Chapters out of the Bible; and alſo Pious and Practical Treatiſes at all leiſure Times, and eſpecially on the LORD's Day at Evening: They will thereby not only retain, but alſo approve their Abilities in Reading, and the good Habit will be ſo rooted in them, that they will be well ſeaſoned in all Likelihood, for ever after.

3*dly*, When the Child ſhall be capable to reap Advantage from the Reading of good Books, the beſt Gift you can beſtow on your *Godchild*, will be ſome inſtructive Practical Diſcourſe to read on the LORD's Day, and at other leiſure Hours. And ſince it was by you, (as Sureties) that this Child entered into Covenant with GOD in Baptiſm, nothing ſurely can be more proper for you, as Godfathers or Godmothers, to put into his Hands, than ſuch Books as explain the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, which was obtained by the Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, and which alſo ſhew the infinite Obligations lying on this Child to be faithful on his Part in the Diſcharge of his Promiſes, which can only be performed by the Grace and Aſſiſtance of GOD's *Holy Spirit*; which Aſſiſtance God hath promiſed to all ſuch as ſeek to him by frequent and fervent Prayer.

4*thly*, Let it not ſuffice, that you give him good Books, but beſtow on him alſo the beſt Advice, as often as you find a proper Opportunity; always reminding him, how fearful a Thing it is to provoke the Wrath of Divine Juſtice, by

faith-

faithleſsly breaking his Covenant with his God. Put him alſo in mind of the great Danger of bad Company, the Snares, Hazards, and Temptations, which he will daily meet with from a wicked and licentious Age; inſtruct him to be diligent and faithful in his Calling, obedient and ſubmiſſive to his Maſter, (or to his Tutors and Governors, as the particular Caſe may be;) and eſpecially to ſhun Sloth and Idleneſs, which are too frequently the Ruin of Youth; and that in all his lawful Diverſions and Recreations, he keeps Company only with virtuous and religious Perſons; that "by denying all "Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, he "may live ſoberly, righteouſly, and "godly in this preſent World."

VI Give me Leave, in the next Place, to preſs and exhort you, (upon all proper Occaſions) both chearfully to undertake, and faithfully to execute this Spiritual Charge.

The Office you have undertaken, is an Act of the higheſt Charity; it is a Charity to the Soul, by contributing to its eternal Welfare. By the faithful Diſcharge of your Office, you have an Opportunity put into your Hands to con-

tribute towards the ſaving of a Soul; and for your Encouragement, the Apoſtle tells you, that "he which ſhall ſave a Soul "from Death, ſhall cover a Multitude "of Sins," *James* v. 20. You have hereby an Opportunity put into your Hands of promoting the Glory of God by building up Children in their moſt holy Faith, and by inſtructing and admoniſhing them to fight manfully and ſucceſsfully againſt the great Enemies of our Salvation, *viz.* the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil.—You have an Opportunity of promoting the Welfare of that Church and Government to which you belong: Of the Church, by breeding up ſound and orthodox Members to be her Support in the ſucceeding Age, and thereby ſecuring her againſt the Wounds of Hereſy and Schiſm, by which ſhe hath been violently rent and diſordered. So likewiſe by ſowing the Seeds of Virtue and Holineſs in the tender Minds of Children, you give the beſt help towards a Reformation of Manners and Principles; thereby ſecuring to the Government induſtrious, faithful, and loyal Subjects; and to the Nation in general a laſting Peace and Happineſs. As therefore you have

have a Love to the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Souls; as you have a Regard for the Welfare of our Holy Mother the Church; as you have a Concern for the Proſperity of your Country; and as you value the Peace and Intereſt of the eſtabliſhed Government; let me exhort and beſeech you faithfully to diſcharge that great Truſt which you have now undertaken; calling to Mind that glorious Reward which ſhall attend your hearty Endeavours in the Work of the LORD. And remember, that "they who turn "others to Righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as "the Stars for ever and ever."

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN I had finiſhed the foregoing Diſcourſe, it came into my Thoughts, that many Perſons, who reſolve conſcientiouſly to perform the Duty of Inſtruction lying on Parents, as alſo the great Truſt of Godfathers and Godmothers, may yet want ſome further Helps to forward their pious Intentions; and that others may poſſibly be unac-

quainted with ſeveral ſmall Tracts, proper to be put into the Hands of Children, for training them up in the Knowledge of God and Religion; I have therefore ventured to make ſome further Propoſals, in order to the Inſtruction of Children; which I humbly offer to the Conſideration of ſuch as are not already furniſhed with proper Methods for the ſame.

I hope all Chriſtians do very early teach their Children to ſay the *Lord's Prayer*, and call upon them to repeat the ſame very diſtinctly every Morning and Evening, thereby to train them up in the Habit and Practice of daily Devotion. But this alone is not ſufficient: They ſhould alſo endeavour to inſtil into the Child, the Meaning and Reaſon of ſuch Performances: They ſhould acquaint the Child that all good Things come from GOD; That by his *Power and Wiſdom* he made and preſerves them; That to his *Goodneſs and Bounty* they owe their Food and Raiment, their Parents and Friends, and whatever elſe is dear to them; and that *Heaven*, a Place of infinite Happineſs, is deſigned for thoſe who lead Holy Lives. By frequently and ſeriouſly repeating theſe Things, the Joys and Affections

fections of Children will be excited, and ſtirred up to an Eſteem and Love of GOD, and to a Deſire of pleaſing and honouring Him. It is well known, the Joys and Affections of Children are as ſoon awakened as any other of their Faculties, (and much ſooner than many People believe) and if theſe are but directed to their proper Objects, the Work of a Pious Inſtruction will be done eaſily and with Pleaſure.

So ſoon as the Child begins to read, it ſhould be inſtructed in the Meaning of the Church Catechiſm, and taught the ſame by Heart; as alſo ſome proper Prayers for Morning and Evening, and Graces before and after Meals.

I propoſe, in the next Place, that the Child be put to read, and made to underſtand ſome ſhort Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm, (ſuch as Mr. *Lewis*'s *Expoſition*, or the like;) and that he be taught to repeat the ſame without Book, as ſoon as the Child is capable to retain it.

As the Child grows up, having been well inſtructed in the plain Meaning of the Church Catechiſm, it will be very neceſſary, that the Child be furniſhed with

with a Common-Prayer Book, as alſo with the Holy Bible; and that he be taught to uſe the ſame at Church. And alſo daily to read ſome ſelect Parts of the *Pſalms* and *Proverbs*, and particularly of the *New Teſtament*; which will both make the Child perfect and exact in his Reading, and at the ſame Time will inſtil into his Mind the Knowledge and Principles of Religion.

As the Child increaſes in Knowledge, it will be neceſſary to put into his Hands ſome larger Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm, and ſuch other Books as explain the Doctrine of the *New Covenant*; which may inſtruct the Child, that Baptiſm is only an outward Sign or Repreſentation of an inward and ſpiritual Grace. That we are not to rely on the bare Adminiſtration of Baptiſm, as it is a corporal and outward Waſhing, and which of itſelf is of no Efficacy to the Saving of the Soul; but we are to labour after the inward Baptiſm, the ſpiritual Regeneration wrought by the Power of the Holy Ghoſt, of which Baptiſm is only a Figure: And as the Apoſtle tells us, that the Effect of Baptiſm "is not the putting "away the Filth of the Fleſh, but the

"Anſwer

"Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards "God." And the Exhortation after Baptiſm acquaints us, "that Baptiſm re- "preſents to us our Profeſſion; which is "to follow the Example of our Saviour "CHRIST, and to be made like unto "Him; that as He died and roſe again "for us, ſo ſhould we who are baptized "die from Sin, and riſe again unto "Righteouſneſs, continually mortifying "all our evil and corrupt Affections, "and daily proceeding in all Virtue "and Godlineſs of Living." A ſhort Specimen of which Sort of Books I have here added, with the ſeveral Prices, that Charitable Perſons may be encouraged to make a Preſent of ſome of them to their Godchildren.

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FINIS.